

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETEL, TW

SUBJECT: OTP PROPOSAL FOR A PACIFIC TELECOMMUNICATIONS
CONFERENCE.

REF: TAIPEI 705

1. AS REPORTED IN CHINA POST OTP ACTING DIRECTOR EGER
SPOKE BEFORE THE ELECTRONIC INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION (EIA)
ON JANUARY 15 IN BOCA RATON, FLORIDA. SPEECH WAS
COMPREHENSIVE PRESENTATION OF MANY TELECOMMUNICATIONS
ISSUES, AND INCLUDED A PROPOSAL FOR A PACIFIC REGION
MULTILATERAL CONFERENCE TO DISCUSS TELECOMMUNICATIONS
QUESTIONS SUCH AS FACILITIES PLANNING, COMPUTER
COMMUNICATIONS AND PRIVACY, SATELLITE DIRECT BROADCASTING,
TRADE AND TECHNOLOGY. EGER SUGGESTED CONFERENCE
PARTICIPANTS INCLUDE USG AGENCIES, INTERNATIONAL TELE-
COMMUNICATIONS CARRIERS, TELECOMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT
MANUFACTURERS, USERS AND OTHERS, AND EXPRESSED HOPE
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THAT FIRST MEETING WOULD BE HELD IN EARLY 1976. EGER

REFERRED TO HIS EARLIER DISCUSSIONS IN JAPAN ON TELECOMMUNICATIONS ISSUES, BUT SPEECH DID NOT REPEAT NOT SPECIFICALLY MENTION INITIAL PARTICIPANTS IN PROPOSED PACIFIC BASIN TALKS. HE DID STATE INTENTION TO "START SMALL AND TO BUILD WITH EXPERIENCE. THE FIRST STEP IS TO ESTABLISH A DIALOGUE WITH THE PRINCIPAL ECONOMIC POWERS IN THE PACIFIC BASIN. AS THE STRUCTURE OF THE FORUM SOLIDIFIES, WE ANTICIPATE ADDING OTHER PACIFIC BASIN COUNTRIES". DEPARTMENT POUCHING COPY OF SPEECH FOR EMBASSY'S INFORMATION.

2. SPEECH IS DIRECTLY RELATED TO "WHITE PAPER ON PACIFIC TELECOMMUNICATIONS CONFERENCE", PREPARED BY OTP AND DISTRIBUTED TO SEVERAL USG AGENCIES IN MID-DECEMBER. ALTHOUGH PAPER DEALS IN MUCH GREATER DETAIL WITH PROPOSED PACIFIC FORUM, IT FOLLOWS GENERALLY ALONG THE LINES USED IN SPEECH. PAPER DOES SAY THAT "U.S., CANADA, JAPAN, AUSTRALIA, INDONESIA, THE PHILIPPINES, TAIWAN AND OTHER NATIONS HAVE MAJOR INTERESTS IN THIS REGION". IN PROPOSING INITIAL MEMBERSHIP, HOWEVER, PAPER RECOMMENDS U.S., AUSTRALIA, CANADA, INDONESIA, AND JAPAN, AND GOES ON TO STATE THAT GROWTH TO INCLUDE OTHER IMPORTANT COUNTRIES OF THE PACIFIC IS ENVISIONED.

3. RESPONDING TO OTP REQUEST FOR DEPARTMENT VIEWS ON PACIFIC PROPOSAL, DEPARTMENT SENT LETTER STATING THAT SUGGESTED DISCUSSION TOPICS SEEM ALMOST ALL-EMBRACING IN THAT THEY COVER WIDE SPECTRUM FROM FACILITIES PLANNING TO THE ROLE OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS IN HEALTH AND EDUCATION; AS WELL AS PROPOSING PARTICIPATION BY GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, COMMON CARRIERS, TELECOMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT MANUFACTURERS, USERS, SCHOLARS, AND OTHERS WITH AN INTEREST IN TELECOMMUNICATIONS. COMBINATION OF VERY BROAD SUBJECT MATTER, AND DIVERSE RANGE OF PARTICIPANTS RAISES QUESTION WHETHER PROPOSAL MAY NOT PROVE ALMOST UNMANAGEABLE TASK. DEPARTMENT SUGGESTED AS FIRST STEP THAT INTERESTED USG AGENCIES MEET AND EVALUATE PROPOSAL, AND THAT USG MEETING BEGIN BY CONCENTRATING ON

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AN AGENDA CONTAINING A SMALL NUMBER OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS SUBJECTS, PERHAPS THOSE MOST MANAGEABLE AND CAPABLE OF SHARP FOCUS. LETTER ADDED THAT IF THERE IS CONSENSUS WITHIN USG ON VALUE OF INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE THEN EXPLORATORY BILATERAL CONSULTATION WITH A SMALL NUMBER OF COUNTRIES WOULD SEEM ADVISABLE. DEPARTMENT SUGGESTED AUSTRALIA, CANADA AND JAPAN AS POSSIBILITIES FOR BILATERAL CONSULTATION TO DETERMINE RECEPTIVITY

TO A POSSIBLE MULTILATERAL MEETING DEALING WITH A
LIMITED NUMBER OF SUBJECTS. DEPARTMENT LETTER ALSO
SUGGESTS CAUTION LEST PROPOSAL BE INTERPRETED BY SOME
AS ATTEMPT TO UNDERCUT THE INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNI-
CATION UNION (ITU) OR MINIMIZE THE IMPORTANCE THE
USG PLACES ON CONTINUED PARTICIPATION IN THAT
ORGANIZATION. COPY OF DEPARTMENT LETTER BEING POUCHED

TO EMBASSY.

4. THEREFORE, OTP'S PACIFIC PROPOSAL IS MATTER NOW
BEING STUDIED AND EVALUATED WITHIN THE USG. EMBASSY
WILL BE KEPT INFORMED OF ANY SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS.
IN MEANTIME, EMBASSY MAY DRAW ON ABOVE IN RESPONDING
TO GROC. SISCO

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